A

DISCOURSE

Occasion'd by the

Much Lamented

DEATH

Of the Reverend

Mr. *Samuel Atkins*,

Late MINISTER of the GOSPEL in *EXON.*

Who Dy'd *July* the 4th, 1702.

Publish'd at the Request of his Relations and Friends.

By *ISAAC GILLING*, V.D.M.

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Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten

TO

Mrs. Jane Atkins.

Dear Siſter,

YOU, who know when, and under what Circumſtances, the following *Diſcourſe* was compos'd, will eaſily believe, that 'twas not deſign'd for Publick View, whatever hath been, or may be ſuggeſted to the contrary. The Diligent Attention with which it was heard, hath made me the more willing to conſent to its Publication; tho' it hath nothing of Wit or Eloquence, to recommend it to the Guſt of the Curious. Altho' I was never more ſtraitned in Time, than when I prepar'd for this Service; yet, I have

ſeldom, if ever, preach'd to a more *affected mournful Auditory:* Which cannot be aſcrib'd to ſo plain a Diſcourſe, but to the ſad Occaſion of it. 'Twas no ſtrange Thing to ſee the Congregation full of Weeping Eyes, to ſuch as conſider'd for whom they wept: Nor was the Sight unpleaſant (however doleful the Cauſe was) when the ſhowers of Tears which then fell ſpake this Language: *Behold how we Loved him.*

NOW theſe ſhort and plain Sermons are adventuring Abroad, they expect various Entertainment, according to the various Capacities and Affections of the Readers. Such as are ready to Cenſure and Condemn what they have not heard or ſeen, will (no doubt) be able to pick out ſomewhat on which to imploy their Talent: But from thoſe at whoſe Requeſt they make their Publick Appearance, and to whom my Brother *Atkins*'s Memo-

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ry is precious, they promiſe themſelves a kind Reception. As they were compos'd for the Attentive Ear, not for the Critical Eye; to move the Heart, not to tickle the Fancy: So if now they are Printed, any be by them excited to prize and improve their ſurviving Miniſters, I ſhall therein Rejoice, what ever further Cenſures I paſs under for publiſhing them.

AS for You. Your Tender Care of Your Dear Deceaſed Husband under his Long Weakneſs, and Your Humble Submiſſion to the Divine Will, under this ſevere Stroke, are truly Exemplary. A deep Mourner you have been, but as one taught of God, you have not murmur'd, nor ſorrow'd as one without Hope. May that *Affection*, which from the Father doth now deſcend upon his Children, be laſting and growing: and may they as they want and deſire, ſo more and more deſerve Your Love

and

and Care. That You may receive more abundant Refreſhment from the overflowing Fountain of Goodneſs, now a very pleaſant Stream is dried up, is the Unfeigned Deſire of,

Newton Abbot
Auguſt 20th,
1702.

YOUR

Affectionate Brother

AND

Faithful Servant,

J. G.

A

DISCOURSE

Occaſion'd by

The Much Lamented DEATH of the REVEREND

Mr. *Samuel Atkins.*

HEB. XI. iv.

----He being dead yet Speaketh.

HAD our Prayers and Tears prevail'd with Almighty God, the Sovereign Diſpoſer of our Lives, your Beloved Paſtor, who is now in the glorious Aſſembly and Church above, had been ſtill in the Land of the Living: And inſtead of *Mourning* for his Death, we had been giving Thanks to God for his Recovery. But 'tis not fit for us to be our own choſers. God ſaw him ripe for Heaven, and us unworthy of his longer Abode here on Earth, how neceſſary, how deſireable ſoever it was for us.

THIS Day is to the People of God in this City, but especially to you of this Congregation, over whose Souls He Watch'd, a Day of Darkness and Gloominess; a Day of Clouds and of thick Darkness; a Day of Trouble, and treading down, and Perplexity from the Lord God of Hosts. How ready is every pious Soul here to take up the words of the Prophet, *Isa.* 22. 4. *Look away from me, for I will weep bitterly; Labour not to comfort me?* How many of you may joyn with me in the words of *David* concerning *Jonathan*, 2 *Sam.* 1. 26. *I am distressed for thee my Brother* Jonathan, *very pleasant hast thou been unto me: Thy Love to me was wonderful?* This *Beth-el* is now turned into *Bochim*. The House of God is become a Place of Weeping, a a House of Mourning. God hath made a sore Breach upon you: This Candlestick hath lost a Burning and Shineing Light; this Congregation a Faithful and Able Pastor. He is hous'd before the Storm, harbour'd before the Tempest which threatens us. His Work is ended, his Testimony finish'd. He now rests from his Labours, and his Works will follow him. To Him to Live was CHRIST. The Grace of Christ was the Principle, the Honour of Christ was the End, the Example of Christ was the Pattern of his Life. Christ he Studied, Christ he Preached, and now he is gone to be for ever with *Him* whom his Soul loved.

HOW many Rebukes from God hath this City receiv'd in a few Weeks: Two Brothers, * some of the most active, useful, publick-spirited Persons which this Age hath produc'd among you, were snatch'd away in a few Days together. And now the Clouds return after the Rain. Your Ingenious, Laborious, and greatly Endeared Pastor, after many

* *Mr.* George *and Capt.* James Gould.

ny Weeks of Weakneſs and Languiſhing, is remov'd from you. He is now gone to his Lord, to give an Account of his Labours, and the Succeſs thereof among you: And I doubt not, but he is doing it with Joy, while you entertain the News of his Death with Sorrow.

WITH what doleful Complaints do many of you lament your Loſs? The Eye which hath ſeen him, ſhall ſee him no more; the Place which hath known him, ſhall know him no more. We ſhall no more ſee his ſmiling chearful Countenance; no more hear his lovely pleaſant Voice. We ſhall no more be Charmed by the Divine and Heavenly Rhetorick of his Sermons; no more be melted by his warm, devout and heart-affecting Prayers; no more be gratify'd and chear'd by his moſt agreeable, lively, obliging Converſation. He is Dead, Oh cutting killing Word! and we ſhall ſee his Face no more.

YOUR Beloved Miniſter hath often ſpoken for you to God, in the Pulpit, and out of the Pulpit: This is your trouble, that you ſhall hear him Pray and Preach no more. This, this my Friends, is the great Complaint among you: 'We ſhall ne-
'ver hear our Dear, our Faithful, our Affectionate
'Paſtor more. We are depriv'd of his Preſence,
'depriv'd of his Prayers, depriv'd of his Labours:
'We have loſt all theſe Valuable, all theſe Invalu-
'able Mercies at once.

I would fain ſtrike in with this Providence, and ſpeak a Word in ſeaſon to you. Give me leave, therefore, to Aſſure you, That tho' you ſhall never ſee his Face more in this World, yet you may hear his Voice. Death which hath clos'd his Eyes, and ſtop'd his Breath, yet can't ſhut his Mouth: For he doth now Preach to you out of his Coffin, and will continue to Preach to you out of his Grave. This

Rod, with which God Corrects you, calls aloud unto you: And what is ſaid in my Text, concerning the Proto-martyr *Abel*, the ſame may be ſaid concerning your Deceaſed Paſtor, ----*He being dead yet ſpeaketh.*

THE Text is ſuitable to the Occaſion: God grant that this Word and Providence together may affect our Hearts; that now we have loſt the Labours and Comfort of a very Able and Uſeful Miniſter's Life, we may not loſe the Benefit and Advantage which God deſigns us by his Death.

I ſhall not ſpend any time in conſidering the Coherence of the words, having had very little for Preparation. In them you may obſerve:

I. A Piece of ſtrange News: A Relation of a very wonderful Thing, A Dead Man ſpeaking: *Abel*, tho' Dead many Thouſand Years ago, yet ſpeaketh.

II. THE Manner how, the Means or Inſtrument by which he ſpeaks. This is intimated in the foregoing Words, *By it.* That is, either

1. BY his ſound and lively Faith, which put him upon offering to God an excellent and acceptable Sacrifice; to which God had reſpect, manifeſting his Approbation, perhaps by conſuming it with Fire from Heaven. For God gave ſuch a Teſtimony of his accepting *Abel*'s Oblation, as was viſible to *Cain*, and provok'd him to Murder him. *Abel*'s Faith and pure Worſhip yet ſpeaketh, being recorded in Scripture, and calling upon us for Imitation.

2. BY his Sacrifice. He ſpeaks to all that read his Story to imitate him: And his Example, which

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is recorded in Scripture, ſpeaks his Honour. Tho' he was murder'd out of the World, with a deſign to prevent his ſpeaking any more; yet his patient Martyrdom for Goſpel Worſhip calls for Imitation, and his Blood cries aloud for Vengeance.

OR, He is yet ſpoken of, ἔτι λαλεῖται. He is recorded in Scripture, and renowned in the Church, to this Day, for his Sincere Faith, and Excellent Sacrifice, and will be ſpoken of throughout all Generations.

ABEL may repreſent a Righteous Perſon, a Faithful Servant of Chriſt in a Private Capacity: But as he was imploy'd in offering Sacrifice to God, ſo he doth fitly repreſent a Faithful Miniſter of Chriſt: And ſo from the Words we may learn this ſeaſonable

DOCTRINE,

THE Death of Faithful Miniſters is a Speaking Providence: or, Goſpel Miniſters ſpeak after they are Dead; they Preach out of their Graves.

IF *Sampſon* found Honey in the Carcaſs of a Lion, ſurely we may meet with Food for our Souls, not only out of the Pulpits of the Living, but in the Coffins and Graves of Dead Miniſters. The laſt Sermon which People are to Study, is the Death of their godly Miniſters: For by that God himſelf Preaches to them. While therefore we bewail the Death of this Able, Faithful and Laborious Miniſter, let us give diligent heed to what God ſpeaks to us thereby.

IN the further proſecution of this Subject, I ſhall enquire,

1. HOW Faithful Miniſters of the Goſpel continue to Speak after they are Dead? By what means, and in what manner, they Preach out of their Coffins and Graves.

2. WHAT Doctrine they Preach, and to whom.

3. How we ought, in a ſpecial manner, to Improve this Providence.

(1.) *HOW do Faithful Miniſters of the Goſpel continue to ſpeak after their Deceaſe? By what Means, and in what Manner, do they Preach out of their Coffins and Graves?*

Anſwer. 1ſt, BY the ſound and wholſom Doctrine which they deliver'd while they were alive. *Zech.* 1. 5, 6. *The Prophets, do they live for ever? But my Word and my Statutes, which I commanded my Servants the Prophets, did they not take hold of your Fathers?* The Prophets dye, but the Word of the Lord dies not with them: It purſues, overtakes, and takes hold of thoſe that heard it. Death will ſtop the Breath of Miniſters, and put an End to their Work: But it cannot put a ſtop to the Word of God which they Preached, That liveth and abideth for ever. Tho' Men may ſhut Miniſters Mouths, tho' Death ſtop their Breath; yet their Sermons will ſpeak when they are Silent, and live when they are Dead. Conſcience repeats the Sermons of God's Meſſengers to their ſurviving Hearers. It brings to their remembrance the Calls and Intreaties, the Reproofs and Warnings, the Counſels and Exhortations which they heard. The Word many times begins its work when Miniſters have ended theirs. When a Faithful Paſtor is remov'd

mov'd from his flock by Death, his Prayers and Sermons come freſh into their Memories. Thus after our Saviour's Death and Reſurrection, his Diſciples remembred his Words, *Luke* 24. 8. The Apoſtle *Peter* knew the Power of the Word, that it would ſtick by thoſe that heard it, after he was dead and gone. Therefore he excites them to their Duty while He liv'd, that they might be able after his Deceaſe to have it always in remembrance, 2 *Pet.* 1. 12---15.

2dly, BY their Holy and Exemplary Converſations. The good Examples of Goſpel Miniſters are, as it were, continued Sermons to their People while they live: And as their ſound Doctrine, ſo their good Converſation in Chriſt, lives in the Memories of thoſe who knew and obſerv'd it, when they are dead: According to the Apoſtles Advice, *Heb.* 13. 7. *Remember them that have the Rule over you, who have ſpoken to you the Word of God: Whoſe Faith follow, conſidering the End of their Converſation.* The Strictneſs and Circumſpection of Miniſters, reproves the Looſeneſs and Careleſneſs of their Hearers, and continues ſo to do, even after their Departure from them.

3dly, GOD ſpeaks to People by the Death of their godly Miniſters. When God ſmites the Shepherd, he warns the Flock. When Miniſters are laid in the Grave, 'tis not a ſilent Grave to any but the Sleepy and Stupid. When Miniſters, Eminent for Gifts, for Grace, for Succeſs, are taken away, and that in the midſt of their Days, is not this a Rebuke from God, a Sign of his Diſpleaſure, and a ſad Omen of approaching Judgments?

(2.) *WHAT Doctrines do deceaſed Miniſters Preach? What is the Matter and Subject of their Diſcourſes? And to whom doth God ſpeak by their Death?*

Anſwer, THE Death of Faithful Miniſters ſpeaks to their Surviving Brethren and to their Hearers; whether they be ſuch as lov'd them, and profited by them; or ſuch as ſlighted them, and were willing to be rid of them.

IT ſpeaks to their Surviving Brethren ſuch Words as theſe:

Firſt. DOUBLE your Watch. When ſome of God's Watchmen are remov'd, it concerns thoſe who are left to be the more vigilant. When God ſmites a careful, watchful Shepherd, He calls upon thoſe whom he ſpares to take heed to themſelves, and to the Flock, over which the Holy Ghoſt hath made them Over-ſeers. The Apoſtle foreſaw, that after his Departure grievous Wolves would enter, not ſparing the Flock: And therfore he calls upon the Elders of the Church *to watch*, *Acts* 20. 29, 30, 31. May thoſe of us whom God hath ſpar'd hear this Call. Let us Watch in all things, that we may be able take up the Words of the Apoſtle, which were the Subject of our Deceaſed Brother's Diſcourſe, to the united Brethren of this County at their Meeting, *May* 8th. 1700, *Act*. 20. 26. *I am pure from the Blood of all Men*

Secondly. PLY your Work, and abound in it: Do as much as you can for Chriſt and precious Souls. What God ſpake to *Joſhua*, He ſeems to ſpeak unto us by his Providence, *Joſh*. 1. 2. Moſes *my Servant is dead, now therefore ariſe*. More work devolves upon ſurviving Miniſters. Let us therefore lay out our ſelves for the Honour of God, and the Good of Souls.

Souls. Let us take heed to our Miniſtry to fulfil it. When ſome Commanders in a Garriſon are ſlain, thoſe who are left had need be very Induſtrious to ſupply their place.

DOTH not this Embaſſador of Chriſt, tho' Dead, yet ſpeaks to us, and calls upon us who ſurvive him? *My Death increaſes your work.* Oh do it with your might! Double your Diligence. You are yet in the Vineyard, Oh do not ſtand Idle there! Work while your Day laſteth. Tis no time for you to loiter, when ſo few Labourers are left. Spare not the Fleſh; Spend your ſelves, and be ſpent for your Peoples good. You cannot better imploy your Time, and exhauſt your Spirits, than in the Service of Chriſt, and for the Good of Souls. Should your great Labours, and hard Studies, ſhorten your Lives, yet the remembrance of them will ſweeten your Death.

WHAT Comfort will it afford us upon a Death-bed, if we can ſay, as our Deceaſed Brother, in the Words of the Pſalmiſt, which he choſe for his Text, when he receiv'd the ſentence of Death in himſelf a Week ago (tho' God gave him a little reviving): *Pſalm* 40. 9, 10. *I have preached Righteouſneſs in the great Congregation: Lo, I have not refrained my Lips, O Lord, thou knoweſt. I have not hid thy Righteouſneſs within my Heart, I have declared thy Faithfulneſs and thy Salvation,* &c.

Thirdly. BE Active and Lively, Fervent and Zealous in your Work. How may the Active Stirring Soul of our Deceaſed Brother, upbraid the Dulneſs and Sluggiſhneſs of too many of us who are left behind him? Surely, he was not one of them who did the Work of the Lord negligently: He was fervent in Spirit, ſerving the Lord. His Heart and Soul was engag'd in His Work.

YOU can't but remember, how earneſt and importunate he was with God for you in Prayer; and how he ſpent his Strength in declaring the Counſel of God to you. How loth was he to be hinder'd in his work! And, how ready after Indiſpoſitions, yea, under Indiſpoſitions, to come into the Pulpit! And when he was there, you are Witneſſes that he did not ſpare his Strength, his Sweat, his Spirit in his Maſter's Work.

Fourthly. BE Patient under Frowns and Cenſures, under Scorns and Reproaches: Work while your Day laſteth. Be Faithful, and truſt God with your Credit and Reputation. Follow Chriſt, who when he was *Reviled, Reviled not again.* Be not weary of your Work, tho' ſome are *ungrateful* to you, and *weary* of you. Your Day is paſſing, the Evening is approaching. E're long you ſhall enter into Peace, and *reſt from your Labours.* Thoſe who ſhine as Lights in this World, tho' ſome endeavour to obſcure and diminiſh them, will hereafter ſhine as the Stars for ever and ever.

THESE are ſome of thoſe Words which God ſpeaks, by the Death of his Miniſters, to their ſurviving Brethren, and Fellow Servants, in the Work of the Goſpel.

AGAIN; The Death of Able and Faithful Miniſters, ſpeaks unto their Hearers. When God removes his Prophets, calls home his Embaſſadors, He calls upon their Hearers; whether they be ſuch as lov'd them, and profited by them; or ſuch as ſlighted them, and were willing to be rid of them.

THEIR Death ſpeaks to ſuch as Lov'd them, and Profited by them.

1. REMEMBER that Miniſters, as well as others, are Mortal, *Zech.* 1. 5. *The Prophets, do they*

they live for ever? Surely no: Miniſters tho' Angels by Office, yet are of the ſame brittle Make, and frail Conſtitution, with other Men. Tho' the Word of God, that liveth for ever, be in their Mouth, yet their Breath is in their Noſtrils, and Death is at their Backs. They, who ſhew others the way to Life, muſt e're long walk thro' the Valley of Death.

2. PRIZE Faithful Miniſters while you have them: Eſteem them highly in Love, for their Works ſake. Think it not enough to Praiſe the Dead, and Adorn their Sepulchres, if you ſlight the Living. If you remain Ignorant and Unprofitable, Barren and Unfruitful, under their Labours, you wound their Hearts, and weaken their Hands: You ſend them to God with Complaints againſt you, and take the ready Way to bring them down to the Grave with Sorrow. They watch for your Souls: They Pray and Wreſtle with God for you: Oh! Do not watch for Occaſions againſt them. Let them not meet with Wounds in the Houſe of their Friends. 'Tis no great Trouble to them to bear the Scoffs and Injuries of open Enemies; this is no more than they expect: But the Slights and Reproaches of thoſe who are within, pierce deep, and even break their Hearts.

3. IMPROVE Miniſters while you enjoy them. Learn what you can of them, get all the Good you can by them, and that without delay. Their Bodies are Earthen Veſſels, which moulder away with Age, or be daſh'd in pieces by ſome violent Stroke: But they bring with them a *Choice* Treaſure of Goſpel Truths: Endeavour to get out of them as much as ever you can of this Treaſure. Go to them for Reſolution of your Doubts; for Direction

in your Duty. Enquire of them, *What you ſhould do to be ſaved?* A Price is in your Hands to get Wiſdom, apply your Hearts unto it: Improve your Opportunity; for ought you know their Time may be ſhort.

4. DO what you can to prolong Miniſters Lives. Perhaps you'll ſay, 'What can we do? Are not the 'Times of Miniſters in God's Hands? Are not 'their Days number'd? Tis very true; yet you may do much towards the prolonging or ſhortening their Lives. 1 *Theſ.* 3. 8. *Now we live, if ye ſtand faſt in the Lord.* The Stedfaſtneſs and Conſtancy of People, is the great Comfort of their Teachers: But their Apoſtacy and Degeneracy, wounds the Hearts, ſtabs and deſtroys the Comfort of their Faithful Miniſters. If you Love and Obey them, if you Adorn the Doctrine of Chriſt, and Lead your Converſations as becomes the Goſpel, this will *revive* and *encourage* them: But if you be Fickle, Formal, Proud, or Contentious, this will *grieve* their Spirits, and is the ready way to *ſhorten* their Days.

THEIR Lives are often ſhorter than the Lives of other Men, of equal Temperance and Sobriety with themſelves. Much Study is a *Wearineſs* to the Fleſh, *Eccleſ.* 12. 12. The intenſe Exerciſe of their Minds, and their Labours in the Pulpit, exhauſt their Strength, and waſt their Spirits. Their Sedentary Life is very prejudicial to their Health. How many Miniſters have there been taken away ſuddenly by Apoplexies? How many ſiez'd with Palſies, Lethargies, and other Diſeaſes of the Brain and Nerves? How many others rack'd with the Gout and Stone? How many are there who at length fall into Dropſies and Conſumptions? Their Labours and Studies break their Health: But the Obſtinacy, the Scandals, the Unkindneſs of their People, break their Hearts. How often do the Sins

Sins of the People kill their Miniſters? They forfeit their Lives by their Unprofitableneſs. How often is God provok'd to extinguiſh Burning and Shining Lights, when thoſe who ſit under them do not rejoyce in, nor walk by the Light? Did People *thrive better*, Miniſters might *live longer*.

5. PREPARE for a Parting Day. If their Enemies do not remove Teachers into Corners, the laſt Enemy will e're long lodge them in the Grave. Look upon every Sermon you hear from your Miniſters, as a Farewel; as their own Funeral-Sermon.

DO not expect that all Miniſters ſhall have a Long Warning, a Languiſhing Diſeaſe, as your Deceaſed Paſtor had; by which God hath been a great while weaning you from him, and diſpoſing you the better to bear his Death. Promiſe not your ſelves the Example of their Patience, and Submiſſion to the Will of God, upon a ſick Bed. If you do not Improve the Mercy you have now had in this reſpect, God may remove other Miniſters by a ſudden Stroke, and then you'l be depriv'd of their Dying Counſels and Prayers.

YET further: Faithful Miniſters *being Dead yet Speak* to ſuch as ſlighted them, and were willing to be rid of them. God calls upon the Profane and Ungodly by the Death of his Miniſters.

(1.) REPENT and turn from thoſe Sins which have haſten'd Miniſters to their Graves. You vex'd and griev'd their righteous Souls while they liv'd. Thoſe of whom the World was not worthy, you eſteem'd the Off-ſcouring of the World. Thoſe who did what they could to Reform the Age, and to keep off Judgments from the Land, you thought not worthy to Live any longer in it. God takes

them away, that they may no more Torment you by their Counſels and Reproofs; that they may be no longer Vex'd by your Filthy Converſations.

(2.) WEEP and Howl for the Miſeries that will come upon you, unleſs you Repent. Let the Sinners in Zion be afraid, and trembling take hold of Hypocrites. Will you hate and ſlight God's Prophets, make light of their Counſels, and ſcoff at their Warnings? And ſhall not God viſit for theſe things, and his Soul be aveng'd on ſuch Scoffers as you? God ſaith, *Touch not mine Anointed, and do my Prophets no harm.* If you ſlight and injure them, 'tis juſt with God to remove them.

IF they cry unto God, God will avenge them ſpeedily.

AND what will you do in the Day of Viſitation, you that don't care for them in a Time of Peace and Proſperity? What will you do for lack of them, in the Day of your Diſtreſs and Calamity? When your Interceſſors are gone, whom will you get to plead with God for you; to ſtand in the Gap, and turn back that Wrath which is breaking in upon you? What a Caſe had *Pharaoh* been in, when under God's Plagues, if there had not been a *Moſes* to intreat for him? Little do the Enemies of ſerious Godlineſs, and of faithful Miniſters, think what they are doing, when they hate and injure the Meſſengers of Chriſt, and wiſh for their Death. When God recalls his Embaſſadors, 'tis to be fear'd He is about to Proclaim War: When he calls home his Labourers, He is about to ſend a Storm. They who account Pious Laborious Miniſters the Troublers of a Nation, when Deſolating Judgments break in upon them, then too late they ſee their Errour, and wiſh for the Counſels and Prayers of ſuch.

WHEN

WHEN the Jews tranſgreſſed very much, God ſent to them by his Meſſengers, becauſe He had Compaſſion on them. But they mocked the Meſſengers of God, and deſpiſed his Words, and miſuſed his Prophets, until the Wrath of the Lord aroſe againſt his People, 'till there was no Remedy, 2 *Chron.* 36. 14, 15, 16. Let Scoffers at Chriſt's Meſſengers read this and tremble.

I proceed now to the

APPLICATION.

I. I Shall draw a few *Inferences* from the Text and Doctrine.

II. *Exhort* you of this Congregation, to Improve this Providence.

1. *INFERENCE.*

SEEING Godly Miniſters ſpeak when they are Dead, and Preach out of their Graves, we may conclude, That 'tis in vain for wicked Men to think to ſhut their Mouths. They imagine a vain thing, who hope to Silence Chriſt's Embaſſadors. Their Perſecutions, their Priſons, their very Death Speaks, and that aloud. And God can cauſe thoſe to remember and obey their Doctrine when they are Dead, who did not regard it while they were Alive.

2. *INFERENCE.*

'TIS a great Sin for People to ſtop their Ears. What ſtupid Creatures are they, who will not be perſuaded when one ſpeaks to them from the Dead?

How,

How Dull of Hearing are they, who will not attend to the Calls of God by thoſe who are gone to their Long Home? What! Shall God ſend one to us from the Dead to call us to Repentance, and we not regard it? Shall we refuſe to hear God ſpeaking to us both by the Living and the Dead?

3. *INFERENCE.*

DOTH righteous *Abel*, who dy'd a Martyr for his Religion many Thouſand Years ago, yet ſpeak: Then we may well wonder at the Blindneſs and Madneſs of a Malignant World, that ſtill tread in the Steps of wicked *Cain*. Tho' *Abel*'s Blood ſtill cries for Vengeance; yet, ſome are ſtill of *Cain*'s Deviliſh Temper: They *hate*, *perſecute*, and would fain *ſlay* the Faithful Servants of Chriſt. Pious Miniſters are the *main* Objects of their Malice. Many ſecretly Rejoice, and ſome openly Triumph at the Fall of God's Worthies. They deſire to be *rid* of Holy Laborious Miniſters: They *hate* them, and account them their *Enemies* for telling them the Truth; for warning them to flee from the Wrath to come; and are glad when they are remov'd by Death.

ARE there any here who hated, deſpis'd, undervalu'd *this* Faithful Servant of Chriſt, who formerly laboured in this Place, but now reſts from his Labours? That wiſh'd in their Hearts they were rid of him, and thought it long before he was Dead? Let ſuch fear leſt the Counſels, and Reproofs, and Warnings for which they hated him, riſe up in Judgment againſt them. What! Hate a Miniſter becauſe he will not ſuffer you to Diſhonour God, Pleaſe the Devil, and Damn your Souls? Account him your Enemy, becauſe he will not let you go to Hell in quiet? If there be any ſuch here, know,

know, your deceaſed Miniſter will now trouble you no more; Counſel, Warn, and Intreat you no more; Call upon you in the Name of the Lord no more; Intercede with God for you no more: But his Counſels and Warnings, his Intreaties and Reproofs, his Calls to you, and Prayers for you, are on Record, and will be brought forth as Evidence againſt the Impenitent another Day.

BUT, Sirs, I hope there are none of you of *this* Number: I think few Miniſters among us have liv'd more *Belov'd*, or dy'd more *Lamented*, than your Deceaſed Paſtor. Your great Concern for him, which you were ready to manifeſt upon all Occaſions, was a very great Comfort to him on his Death Bed. And your *deep* Sorrow and *plentiful* Tears this Day, are a clear Evidence of your hearty Love and Affection to him. *May the Lord reward you abundantly for it.*

EXHORTATION.

I come now to Exhort you of this Congregation, to make a right Improvement of this Providence.

DO faithful Miniſters ſpeak when they are Dead? Doth God Preach to their People by their Death? See to it, that you give *diligent heed* to what God ſpeaks to you by the Death of your Excellent Paſtor. Hear the Voice of this Rod, and learn thoſe Leſſons which God would teach you by this Affliction.

I. CONSIDER your Loſs. You have loſt a *Lively Rouzing Preacher*. You have loſt a *Praying Miniſter*; One that prayed in Prayer; One that wreſtled with God. Some of you, I doubt not, have loſt a *Spiritual Father*, by whom you were begotten

gotten to Jeſus Chriſt thro' the Goſpel, 1. *Cor.* 4. 15. All of you have loſt a *Faithful Watchman*, who watch'd for your Souls, as one that muſt give an account. You have loſt a Miniſter of a *Publick* and *Generous Spirit*; one who ſought not yours, but you. You have loſt an *Able Miniſter*; a Workman that needed not to be aſhamed: One who in Preaching had not many that exceeded him, and in Prayer (I think) had few that equall'd him. You have loſt One that had a moſt *tender Affection* for you; who was willing to have imparted to you, not the Goſpel of Chriſt only, but his own Soul alſo, becauſe you were Dear to him: One who could have been contented to ſtay a while longer out of Heaven, that He might be Inſtrumental to bring you thither.

ARE there not many among you that can ſay, 'God hath bleſſed his Miniſtry to my Conviction 'and Converſion? By him God was pleas'd to 'work upon me, to excite me to mind God and 'my Soul. Had it not been for his Miniſtry, I 'might ſtill have gone on in the Broad Way that 'leads to Deſtruction. He was the Inſtrument in 'God's Hands to open mine Eyes, and to turn me 'from Darkneſs to Light, and from the Power of 'Satan unto God. By him my Conſcience was firſt 'awaken'd, my Heart ſoftned. By him I have ma-'ny times been Quickned, Comforted and Refreſhed.

HAVE not many of you loſt a *dear* and *intimate Friend?* How Pleaſant and Entertaining was his Company! How did his Smiling Countenance, his Obliging Carriage, his Innocent Cheerfulneſs ingage your Affections, ſo that your Souls did cleave to him?

II. SEARCH and try your Ways. Deſire God to ſhew you, wherefore He contends with you. Enquire after your Sins, and be Humbled for them.

Have

Have not your Sins had a Hand in ſhortning your Miniſter's Days? Do not your Iniquities correct you, and your Backſlidings reprove you? Doth not your Barrenneſs and Unprofitableneſs teſtify againſt you? Have you not procured this unto your ſelves? I do not accuſe you; But now God is *Smiting*, it becomes you to be *Searching*.

YOU have been frequently dicourſing of your Miniſter's Diſtempers. Some of you impute his Death to one Diſeaſe, ſome to another. *'Twas the Gout*, ſaith one: *The Spleen*, *a Dropſy*, *an Aſthma*, ſay others. But who ſaith, Had not my Sins a Hand in his Diſeaſes? Did not my Sins haſten his Death? Who is there that ſmites on his Breaſt, and ſays, What have I been? What have I done? How have I carried it towards my Paſtors, towards my God, that God hath taken away the Youngeſt Settled Miniſter in the City, in the Flower of his Age?

THIS is a Special Seaſon for you to enquire into the State of your Souls. Search to the bottom. Now perhaps ſome particular Sins ſtare you in the Face; ſtrike in with God's Providence, repent and reform. Have you been unkind to your Miniſter? Unfruitful under the Means of Grace? Or have you over-lov'd and Idoliz'd him? Priz'd him ſo, as to ſlight and undervalue others? Been proud of him, when you have not profited by him? Boaſted of your Priviledge in having a Teacher of ſuch excellent Gifts and Graces, while you have been careleſs of your Duty?

III. LAMENT your beloved Miniſter's Death. Weep and Mourn, not upon his account, but your own. I doubt not but Death was his Gain, tho' it be our Loſs. God was pleas'd to give him, tho' a

long, yet, a gentle Viſitation: And tho' he was not without Deſires and Hopes of Recovery, that he might do God more Service; yet did he often imagine that he ſhould ſhortly put off his Tabernacle. A little before he left his own Houſe the laſt time, he ſaid, *However others Flatter me, I am reſolv'd I will not Flatter my ſelf.*

SINCE his laſt Bleeding, which waſted and ſunk his Spirits, his Soul was in a moſt compos'd and reſign'd Frame: Tho' not without Fear of Death, yet with good Hope of a bleſſed Life after this. A Week before his Death, when he thought his Diſſolution near, (tho' afterward God gave him a little reviving) when the Paſſage into the inviſible World was open to him, and he look'd on himſelf as ſtanding on the brink of Eternity; he profeſs'd his ſincere Love to Chriſt, and his Hope of Pardon and Salvation by Chriſt. He ſolemnly renew'd his Covenant with God, and dedicated himſelf to each Perſon in the Godhead diſtinctly. And the Night before his Death, when he perceiv'd by the decays of Nature that his Departure was near at hand, he did, with a great deal of Seriouſneſs and Earneſtneſs, commend his Soul into the Hands of God; pronouncing a hearty *AMEN* to his own Prayer. After this, having lain ſeveral Hours without ſpeaking, or ſeeming Senſe of Pain, God gave him a very quiet and eaſy Paſſage: He died without a Sigh or a Groan.

We have good and rational Grounds to conclude that he is happy: Therefore, I ſay, Weep not for him, but for your ſelves, and for your Children: The Nation, the County, the City, but eſpecially this Congregation, hath receiv'd a very great Loſs. An excellent Miniſter is dead; a Man of moſt pregnant Parts, of a clear Head, a quick Apprehenſion,

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a faithful Memory, a fruitful and ready Invention; which furniſh'd him with apt Expreſſions upon all occaſions. He had a happy way to inſinuate himſelf into your Hearts, both in and out of the Pulpit. He Preach'd with as great Acceptance as moſt, and Pray'd to the great Admiration of all. For holy Fervency, for readineſs and aptneſs of Expreſſions upon all Emergencies, I think he hath left very few like him.

HE was a burning and a ſhining Light, and you did not long ſince rejoyce in his Light; now this Light is extinguiſhed. The brighter he ſhin'd, the faſter he waſted. Let it not be ſaid of you, that this Preacher of Righteouſneſs periſhed, and you did not lay it to Heart.

By his Death, the Intereſt of Chriſt on Earth is weakned; our Lord hath one uſeful Servant leſs in this dark and wretched World of ours. Much real Worth is remov'd; his Gifts and Graces are gone; his Work is ended: You will no more be warmed by his fervent Prayers, rouz'd by his lively Sermons, edify'd by his Diſcourſe, nor cheer'd by his pleaſant Company.

HATH God called home an Embaſſador, taken away a Watch-man, diſcharg'd a Maſter-Builder, remov'd a faithful Paſtor; and ſhall not you and I be ſenſible of this ſevere Stroke of Providence? Shall the Lord ſay of us, *I have ſmitten them and they have not grieved?* Did you love and value your Miniſter while he liv'd, and will you not bewail his Death, and drop a Tear on his *Grave?*

BUT mourn and grieve upon Spiritual accounts; and in a right manner, turn the Floods of Sorrow into the right Channel.

MOURN and Weep,

For the Sins you have committed.
For the Mercies you have forfeited.
For the Judgments which are threatned.

1. MOURN and Weep for the Sins you have committed. Would you know what they are? Ask your own Conſciences, they will tell you, charge them to deal faithfully, freely, and impartially with you. Have you not neglected Ordinances? Profaned Sabbaths? Reſtrained Prayers? Reſted in an empty Profeſſion, in a barren Form of Godlineſs? I do not accuſe you; if your own Hearts do not, then may you have Confidence towards God. While you lament your dead Miniſter, bewail your own dead Hearts.

2. MOURN for the Mercies you have forfeited. May not the beſt ſay, Verily we are guilty concerning our Miniſter? Have you not forfeited the Lives and Labours of God's Meſſengers; the Light of the Goſpel, the Convictions and Conſolations of the holy Spirit? Pray bear with me. Conſcience will not always flatter you; and Death will not flatter you: Oh! do not flatter your ſelves.

3. MOURN for the Judgments which are threatned, for the Miſeries which may be coming upon us. The Death of the Godly opens a Breach for Judgments to enter at. Your late Paſtor was one who ſtood in the *Gap* to keep off Judgments from this City, and from the Nation. When *Moſes*, who ſtood in the Breach to turn away God's Wrath, is gone, what can murmuring rebellious *Iſrael* expect but fiery Indignation? When *Lot*, who ty'd

up

up God's Hands from executing Vengeance, is departed, what can filthy *Sodom* expect but a Storm of Fire and Brimſtone from Heaven? *Iſa.* 57. 1. *The Righteous is taken away from the Evil to come.* When the Righteous are taken away, 'tis a ſign that Evil is coming, juſt ready to ſhew its Face, and break in upon us. Such have a great Intereſt in God; their Prayers are very prevalent with God: They do, as it were, hold God's Hands. On this account *Joaſh*, a wicked Prince, bewails the Death of the Prophet *Elijah*, 2 *Kings* 13. 11, 14.

WELL may we fear that Judgments are coming, when good Miniſters and ſerious Chriſtians are taken away, and that in the moſt uſeful Age of their Life. When the Stakes in the Hedge are pull'd up, may we not fear that God is about to lay his Vineyard waſt? When the Pillars of the Houſe are pull'd down, what can we expect but Ruine? When the Shepherds are ſmitten, what will befal the Flock? When God's Husbandmen are gone, how will the Field of the Church be over-run with Briars and Thorns? When Maſter-Builder's are taken off, how ſlowly will the Building go on, if it be not wholly at a ſtand?

MOURN for ſpiritual Judgments. 'Tis a very ſore Affliction when Teachers are remov'd into Corners by Men; yet, in ſuch a Caſe, there is hope that God may call them out of their Corners, and employ them again: But what a ſad Providence is it, when young, when uſeful Miniſters, are laid in their Graves, and muſt work no more.

MOURN for fear leſt God depart, and deſolating Judgments break in upon us. The Death of very uſeful Perſons in Church or State, is a ſad Omen of approaching Calamities. 'Tis obſerv'd, that *Methuſelah* died the Year before the Flood. St.

Auguſtine

Auguſtine died a little before *Hippo*, the City of which he was Biſhop, was taken by *Genſeric* King of the *Vandals*. *Paræus* before *Heidelberg* was taken. *Luther* juſt before *Germany* was over-run with War. And doth not the Death of three ſuch uſeful Men as God hath lately remov'd from this City forebode Wrath and Woe?

EXHORTATION 4.

SHEW your Love and Reſpect to your deceaſed Miniſter: Shew it by remembring his Doctrine and living up to it. Carefully reſerve, and faithfully improve the precious Truths you have heard from him. Do as *Eliſha* did by *Elijah*, when he was taken up into Heaven; he took up the Mantle which fell from him. Remember his Counſels and Cautions, that they may not be loſt. Let the Truths which you have learnt of him be often in your Thoughts; let his Words be often ſounding in your Ears, that he may continue to ſpeak to you as long as you live: Let not the Seed which he hath ſown be buried with him.

SHEW your Love and Affection to him, by your Reſpect to his Family; to his diſconſolate Widow and fatherleſs Children. Need you be put in mind, how the Father and Son in a Succeſſion of five or ſix and forty Years, ſpent their Time and Strength in Labouring among you. Do you want to be excited to a grateful Senſe of this, and to expreſs it to the ſurviving Branches of the Family.

LET your Lives be a fair Copy and Tranſcript of your deceaſed Miniſter's Sermons; that thoſe who obſerve you may read his Diſcourſes of Humility, Patience, Truſt in God, and heavenly-mindedneſs in your Carriage and Behaviour.

RE-

REMEMBER his Converſation among you, how Pleaſant and Cheerful, how Courteous and Obliging; he was an Inſtance, that a good Chriſtian and a faithful Miniſter may live a very joyful Life; and that Chriſtianity, tho' it ſeverely condemn Froth and Vanity, yet is no Enemy to innocent Mirth and good Humours.

REMEMBER his Moderation and Peaceableneſs. He was of a charitable and healing Spirit; far from confining Religion to a Party; and a Stranger to that cenſorious Humor which is too common in our Days. Oh, that God would give more Light, and Life, and Love, to a divided diſtracted Nation.

EXHORTATION 5.

QUIETLY ſubmit to the Will of God, who hath put this Cup of Affliction into your Hands. Be Dumb, and do not open your Months in Murmurings and Complaints, becauſe it is the Lord who hath done it.

HIS Day is over, his Work is ended, his Sun is gone down even at Noon. I need not tell you what he was: You knew him very well, and his Praiſe is in the Churches of Chriſt in this Country. The Church of God hath loſt a *Shining Miniſter:* This Society an *Able Paſtor:* Your Aged Paſtor and Teacher a *Dear Fellow-Labourer:* His Wife, a *Loving Affectionate Husband:* His Children a *Tender Careful Father:* His Friends a *Faithful Counſellour:* Yea, his Enemies a *Fervent Interceſſour.* But our Loſs is his Gain; and while we are Lamenting on Earth, he is Triumphing in Heaven.

FINIS.